



THE HILL OF THORNS

BY ADELE MARIE SHAW

THE coming of the appointment was to Mallory more than rescue. His haunted face relaxed into an expression normal and pleasant to see, a look that his wife had almost forgotten. She let the baby beat a teaspoon upon the tray of the high chair while she moved quickly round the breakfast-table to kiss Mallory's forehead, from which the flush had not yet subsided.

"I am so thankful, Howard," she said. Her dark eyes filled, and the tears slipped upon her cheeks. She was a pretty woman, naturally plump; her newly acquired thinness had the pathos of emaciation.

Howard Mallory, the letter that had brought the transforming announcement

still in his hand, drew her close, his heart pounding against her frailness in big strokes.

"God knows I am," he said solemnly.

After her husband had gone, Ellice Mallory established the baby in a cushion-fenced space upon the floor and cleared the table. She stepped deliberately and daintily and hummed as she worked. Then she sat down on the floor by little Robert and seconded his experiments with the wooden blocks, her mind traveling the dreary distances of the past year.

Mallory had come to Lake City with his wife and his boy prepared to enter instantly a Promised Land. To a country editor the money offered for his help in

the municipal campaign, and the position awaiting his acceptance when the campaign should be ended, had appealed in terms no less than magical.

"Come down and talk for us," the letter had said. "If you can walk away with the mob here as you did with the up-country crowd last year, the party can afford your price."

Mallory had known that he had the knack of gripping an audience, putting an opponent's views better than the man himself could put them, then convincing even the man that the views were rotten at their specious core. He had believed in his party; it was the party of reform. And he had always wanted a hand in the city's struggle for decency.

He had come in September and worked faithfully till, with election day, the hope of a reform victory for Lake City had gone out. The salary he had drawn for his services had been smaller than the promises. Concerning the appointment, the district leader had been too sanguine. The reform party was in no position to give appointments. In the compromise that at the last had wrested something from the fears of the "grafters" there had been bigger men than Howard Mallory to consider. A false kindness had continued to promise even after election, and Mallory's inexperience had continued to believe that, in spite of inevitable delay, the position would be his.

For the first months he had found board for himself and Ellice and little Robert in a quiet house near a quiet park. Every day Ellice had taken the baby to the park, and there dreamed of the time when they could move their "own things" to the city and have a home.

When the "Lake City Republic" had given half a column to one of Mallory's speeches, she had sent him out to buy ten copies, and these she had marked and mailed to Weston, their home town, thus bracketing Mallory's name with those of men of national importance in minds familiar with the "Republic" only in its tri-weekly form.

She had been constantly and pitifully homesick. Sometimes the longing to go out into her old back yard and see the Delawares ripening under the spreading grape leaves, the snow apples fallen red and tempting on the green stretch of the

orchard grass, the blaze of Mrs. Beal's salvias across the garden hedge, swept away her courage in a devastating wave. The wind was sweet in Weston. The smell of Lake City was smoky; to her there was always in its air a sense of suffocation. But Ellice Mallory was in love with Mallory and with her baby, and deft with a thousand frugalities learned in a Mississippi household that had had nothing left after the war but blood and pluck. She used her talents and suppressed her aches.

Through the long autumn and the longer winter she made each month's money cover each month's expenses, though in the end it meant a furnished room far from the quiet park. In this room the three lived and slept and ate. In it she washed their clothes and dried them bit by bit when Mallory was away. Howard Mallory pressed his trousers under the mattress, and wore his oldest suit in the house, saving the worn best for the street. The cleanliness Ellice maintained made in the beginning the sordid closeness endurable. But as weeks went after weeks into the inexorable distance, while the appointment came no nearer, there was less to eat, and the blight of their surroundings fell on appetite.

The month's money covered nothing, being itself nothing. The desultory work furnished by the politicians had reached its vanishing-point. The enemy held the door of public service. The Mallorys were forced to confess to those left behind them in Weston that they had not prospered; this to Ellice was worse than homesickness. They borrowed of Mallory's mother, of the few friends who could or would lend to them.

The things he saw, the things he could not escape, both among the out-and-out "grafters" and among the self-seekers who had attached themselves to "reform" for what they could get out of it, made Mallory grit his teeth. There was no longer a place for him in Weston. He had abandoned to another man the only position into which he fitted. Now there seemed no place for him in the city. He began to have a sense of what Ellice's fears had meant when she had hesitated over the change. She had at first shown the fright of the dependent wife when the husband looses his hold on a sure

support to swim after one untried, though less humble.

This man had known that his wife had been longing for the breezes in the Weston maples, but he had not himself felt the longing till spring. Then it fastened on him; his enthusiasm for "a broader contact with life" went into its hungry maw. The city appeared to him a cesspool where wretched creatures swam and wallowed in their own filth, fouling one another with the slime of their own degradation.

Ellice was ill and shabby. The shabbiness made her look more forlorn than the illness. She had the love of the ephemeral in dress that had survived transplanting from a land of flowers and summer. Soft, fluttering things, that fade and crumple and need everlasting renewal, Lake City had soon begrimed to tawdriness. Mallory felt its symbolism, and grew bitter at himself. The boy, too, was ailing.

The strain wrought upon husband and wife to the point of morbidness in nerves hitherto wholesome. Once when Mallory sat late with a merchant on whom he was urging his fitness for an advertised position, the man pressed a drink on him. To refuse seemed to Mallory to jeopardize the little chance he had, and he tasted the whisky and went home to Ellice with it upon his breath. The whiteness of her face grew first scarlet and then gray. Mallory, insulted, and yet aware of having paltered with a fixed habit of abstinence to gain an end, beat upon her terror with a resentful word that she attributed to "drink."

They threshed the matter out, tormented nerves crying on her part for reassurance, tired mind and body desperate on his for peace, and the only serious moment of friction between them wore itself away into the making of new plans. Newspaper work Howard had attempted; for success his ways were still too much the ways of the Weston daily. Then as a last hope he got "taken on" at a shoe store, and was discharged at the end of a week for opposing the browbeating of a vulgar clerk.

Once when there was no milk for little Robert's supper, and no money to buy it, he tried to borrow of an acquaintance, and was treated like a hobo. Ellice, sym-

pathizing, prophesying better things for "to-morrow," telling over the "cunning" deeds of the boy, nestling warm and trustful in his lean arms, only thrust deeper the late-come terror into Mallory's mind. If only, he thought, it were snow-time, he would borrow the landlady's shovel and make money!

Now the appointment had come. The position paid twenty-five hundred a year. Work and salary were to begin at once.

"God knows I am thankful," said Howard Mallory, and meant it.

Out in the suburbs, where the air seemed to come undefiled from the horizon, Ellice found for them two rooms in a market-gardener's cottage.

"Oh, this flat country!" she wailed in mock distress. "When you get rich, Howard, I shall go out and build a low range of hills behind Lake City."

They laughed often. On the gardener's vegetables and milk of his Jersey herd Ellice and the boy thrived. Down the road, under the lindens, the boy toddling ahead, the mother close behind, hand ready to catch an adventurous stumbler, they met Mallory on summer evenings filled with peace.

On the way to and from the office Mallory dreamed them standing there, or planned his campaign speeches for the coming autumn. He no longer thought of Lake City as a cesspool. In his dreams was the confidence of young ambition buoyantly renewed.

One night when September was warm with her final glow his eyes held something besides dreams. Ellice waited till little Robert was in bed, then perched on her husband's knees.

"Vat iss?" she asked, imitating the gardener's good Johann. "Have they said you 're to run for President?" She rumbled his hair, and drew an erasing finger across the frown in his forehead.

He looked into her eyes as if he might find in them some answer to the thing that bothered him. "I don't know what it is, Ellie. There 's a feeling against me in the office. I 'm disliked."

"What nonsense! Every one likes you."

"No, they don't. But it 's something to do with politics; don't bother your head about it. We 'll get rid of Gilly, and then everything will come right."

"Rid of—Gilly!" Ellice repeated the words in a foolish, dazed fashion.

"Gilly and Gilly's gang. I'd come back from my grave to fight that man."

"But, Howard, you must n't fight Mr. Gilly. He gave you the appointment."

Mallory laughed. "You funny child! what put that into your head? Gilly 'd sooner kill me than give me a 'job.'" He was on his feet, restless and distressed, in spite of banter. Ellice, dropped to hers, stood protesting before him.

"But he did. I asked him, and he did."

"You asked him?" Plainly Mallory thought his wife for the moment insane. He regarded her with alarmed tenderness. "What on earth do you mean, Ellice!" he cried, his eyes studying her.

"He used to be—used to dig our garden in Meridian before we came North. They're from Mississippi. You said he was a 'power' here. I got the landlady to take care of Bobbie—"

"You called on Patrick Gilly?"

"Yes—"

"Tell me all you said." Mallory's voice showed the numbness of his mind under an unprevisioned shock.

"You were so frightfully worried! I could n't bear it. You talked in your sleep."

"But what did you say to Gilly?"

"I said we were living here, and I—"

"Yes; but about the place, about me?" Even the hurt wonder of her agitation came unnoticed upon the stark horror of his waiting; suspense sounding in the wrenching demand of his words steadied her to swifter speech.

"He was pleased that I came. I reckon he was pleased that I remembered them. We talked about Meridian. He spoke beautifully of my father—"

"But what did he say of me?" Again the demand, tense with suspicion that she was trying to avoid an answer, cut her story short.

"He asked me, and I told him how we were getting on, how they promised you the position. 'And could n't deliver the goods,' he put it, and he was very kind. No one could have been kinder, Howard. 'Don't you worry,' he said. 'I'll fix it. They're a forgetful lot, them reformers; they don't take care of their own.' And then he told me all about his grandchild-

dren, and asked about our Robert, and it was he sent me this address. He knew that you did n't know."

"You never told me." The accusation sharpened the amazed trouble with which she watched him.

"How could I? You would have been so sorry that I'd had to humble mys—" She broke off, repelled at being forced to justify what had cost her so much struggle. There was a hateful silence as her voice stopped. She seemed terribly babyish as she stood waiting. "Don't!" she cried. "Don't look so!"

He appeared not to hear. His eyes rested on her like the eyes of the blind. "It takes away all I had left out of this failure—my self-respect," he said at length gropingly, as if in a hurried search he had tried for some hope to fasten on, and had found none.

"Howard! You can make speeches just the same. He knows you make speeches." She put out her hands. He drew back, unheedingly avoiding her.

"I can't take my living from Gilly and knife him. That's what they meant at the office. Last night's papers had me on the list of speakers for Hubbell. They think I've sold myself and not made good." In the absorption of his hopelessness he turned away from her, moving like the sick or the very old. He was no more aware that he was cruel than the wild thing is aware, with the blade in its throat and its fangs sunk in the hand that plunged the blade. It was like being betrayed by his own soul. To find himself wrapped in dishonor that could be torn from him not even with his own flesh! His boy would grow up the son of the man who sold out to Gilly. To Ellice's pleadings he gave no answer till at last, "How could you!" he cried. "How could you!"

PATRICK GILLY was busy. He had withdrawn to a final seclusion sought only when need pressed hard. His gaze wandered impartially over two colored supplements on the wall,—a kneeling child and a race-horse,—over the cobwebbed windows, and the square front of his own aggressive boots. In apparent idleness the boss smoked, or let his cigar go out and chewed upon it without noticing its stale chill. There was battle to direct;

this time there was to be no compromise with a reform force too strong to be ignored. The ring was entrenched. It would take more than one of the short Lake City administrations to dislodge it. Hunched in his chair, his big fist now and then beating a kind of rhythm on his desk, he worked, his apparent idleness only the attitude of a heavy concentration.

His plans were coming out like invisible writing made black in the fire of his own determination. Each point of attack was settled, each captain appraised and fitted to his work.

He was lounging, still peacefully, still apparently idle, when Mallory opened the door. A queer change invaded his face, following a sharp instant of rage at interruption—a change that seemed a kind of shame for the visitor.

"My name 's Mallory, Mr. Gilly. I 've come to resign." In the face of the scowl, Mallory would have kept his balance; smitten by the vicarious shame he toppled to the side of anger. "I 've come," he repeated, "to resign the position you gave me."

"Need n't have bothered me with it; they read writin' out there." Gilly indicated the offices with the turn of a thick thumb. "Sit down," he commanded, and spat into one of the rusty tin cuspidors that with two chairs and the desk made the furniture of his retreat. It was the first time he had had resort to this convenience during the hour of his seclusion, but he always spat in the presence of a reformer.

Mallory sat down. He had come to talk it out. "I wanted to tell you personally that—"

"What for?" Mr. Gilly bit deeply into his cigar and leaned forward in his chair, the light of battle well conceived still glittered in his blue eyes.

Mallory gave back the harsh penetration of the look steadily. "I never knew till day before yesterday that it was to you I owed—"

"Feel yer white wings dirtied since ye knew?" Gilly's lips loosened on the cigar in an unpleasant twist.

"No." Mallory broke out the word with hard force. "I feel like a thief."

"And why, then?"

"Because I 've been living on your gift

and fighting you. My wife did n't understand. She does n't know—" Mallory stopped and tried again—"I meant to thank you first, and then resign. Of course I know it cost you something to give me the place. Jestrow expected it for his nephew. And I can do nothing in return for the trouble—" The visitor floundered a bit, forsaken by his customary tact.

"I can generally manage any trouble in my corner of the game." Gilly's gaze took on a pugilistic fixity. Then a natural twinkle reappeared in his eyes. They had seen a good deal since contempt had begun to clear from them. The last two days were cut into Mallory's face in unmistakable print. "'T was no trouble, Mr. Mallory. I was glad to do it. Your wife's father was good to me when I was makin' a poor start in life. It 's little any one thought then that Patsy Gilly 'd ever be able to do a good turn to him or his! What have ye in mind better than the job ye 're leavin'?"

"Nothing. But I can't take my bread and butter from a man I 'm fighting, and I won't be muzzled. You would n't do it yourself."

"I thought there was nothin' I wouldn't do, accordin' to you people." Gilly pursed his straight lips and wrinkled his red-veined cheeks in an amused grimace. "Have a seegar," he urged. "'T is a reform seegar—John S. Bidwell's."

"I 'd rather have yours than Bidwell's; but I won't smoke, thank you." Mallory had always despised Bidwell. Running with the reform hare and hunting with the Gilly pack! Was Howard Mallory hereafter to be classed with men like Bidwell? "I can't keep the position. You know that as well as I." He spoke with the human warmth, the assured appeal to the listener, that had made his public talks a success.

"And the wife and boy?"

"They will go to my mother."

"You 're going to send the wife away?"

"There 's nothing else to do."

"Listen, you young—" Gilly spat the final word into the tin cuspidor. "Listen to me." He got up and leaned his big body against the door as if blocking the exit, his great jaw emphasized above the jewel in his tie. "Just put this in your pipe. You 've nothin' to do with it.

'T was not meant for you. Do you suppose I liked your filthy talk about me?—I 've noticed ye all right!—You can't hurt me, but I 've itched to get my fingers on ye. I would now if ye were a man's size." Gilly puffed himself full of angry breath; then he grinned. "You don't like me gettin' ye a job. I don't like givin' it to ye. 'T is a pill for the two of us. I 've swallowed mine; take yours, and don't holler. Do your work—for the city; and fight Patrick Gilly."

"And be always suspected—" Mallory's lips were set in a line as hard as Gilly's.

"Don't be an infernal selfish pup! The' 's some would suspect the saints in heaven. That 's yer pill. Your wife took hers; she swallowed the Bovard pride and come to me. I know the Bovards. Judge Robert Bovard 'd sooner seen his daughter goin' for help to old Mammy Sue—you bet he would. Smash me! but that nigger was fat! I can see her now, waddlin' over, fit to burst with mad because her 'li'l' Miss Ellie' was playin' with the 'Gilly trash.'"—A reminiscent chuckle interrupted the words. Mallory smiled wintrily.—"See here."—Gilly fixed him with a glance that had searched the minds of many before him.—"If ye 're ever tempted to say the quick word to that little woman of yours, remember what she did for ye. Never was a Bovard woman knew potaties from peanuts in politics. The Judge would n't have had it. But they 'd pride to burn. Once they 'd everything, then they 'd nothin' but the big house, and that mortgaged. And what those women could n't buy, they went without, and never a whimper out of their mouths. And 't was with them the child that 's your wife grew up. If you could have seen her face the day she come to me, before she knew I was lookin' at her! The pity of ut! She made herself cheap for the likes of you, and ye ain't worth it."

Mallory winced, feeling the truth in the man's words; but the truth did not alter what he had to do. His mouth held its hard line.

"Don't set yer jaw at me!" snapped Gilly. "What I did was n't for Mrs. Mallory nor for you. 'T was for Ellie Bovard, daughter of the man that was good to Pat Gilly. Go on and fight me.

I 'll make it plain ye 're none of mine." A glint like the passing flick of an idea touched the lips of the speaker; the twinkle in his eyes shone more cheerily.

The aged doorkeeper trembled as Mallory went forth, remembering whose had been the negligence that had made possible an intrusion; but the great man was oblivious. "Send in Berber," he commanded. Berber was the particular press agent of Mr. Gilly's heart. To him the boss set forth the situation and a query. Mr. Berber hastily performed with a fountain-pen and a scrappy pad.

"FAT CLERKSHIP FOR FOE," he read after a rapid interval, "'THE BEST MAN,' says Patrick Gilly, 'no matter what his party,' so the mayor hands out a city hall job to a smiling would-be-good. Can the reformers beat that?"

"Howard Mallory, the most blackguardly talker of the deformed anti-administration howlers, gets the place because he 's an expert in the department! Now he 's going to take the stump for Hand-in-Glove Hubbell! The good old party is n't afraid to feed and make husky its enemies! It 'll put 'em in condition, *then beat 'em to a standstill!* 'Show me a reform administration dares do the same,' says Gilly. Watch 'em, boys. They 've got no answer ready!"

"Something in that line?" asked Berber.

"More ginger. 'Feed the Skinny-Bones' (picture of 'em at the trough, mayor pourin' in the slush)—and whittle it. Less words and more point," assented Gilly.

Mallory worked late in the office to make up lost time, and then walked home. He had telephoned Ellie. He wanted while he was alone to get back nearer the normal altitudes where life showed other colors than the hue of shame. His recognition of his position was still too acute for the clear seeing of anything outside his own pain.

In the last part of his interview with Gilly he had been made aware that the pain had had its strongest hold through the breach with Ellie. Into the abyss opened between them his assurance, his power of decision, seemed to have dropped. He distrusted himself; he had ceased to trust her. She had been capable

of an act and a deception revolting to him. He had grown up among women who held their men to a high sense of public duty. They had been the fine correctors of any aberration that blurred clean loyalty to an exacting code. Their loftiness of standard had been as unconscious as—Ellie's pride.

On the word he went back to Gilly's shrewd arraignment of his own possible intolerance. Had he been unjust? An "infernal selfish pup"? What was a man to fight for if not for his self-respect? But in what had he, after all, forfeited that? It was not self-respect, but the respect of others, that he had feared to lose. He had known that he should not keep the appointment if the keeping of it and the keeping of self-respect clashed. Alone in the loudly echoing streets of the suburbs, he saw himself a coward, shrinking intimidated before a misconception. In the revulsion he judged himself as harshly as he had till then pitied himself profoundly. Gilly, coarse-mouthed, coarse-lived, a leech made fat at the city's expense, had understood better than her own husband the working of Ellie Mallory's mind.

The explanation of her deception was not that she had known what she had done, but that *she had not known*, and had wished to spare him, the man who had brought her to hungry want, the sight of her shame in begging. She had been as innocent of the whole bearing of her act as the child who tries to patch up a silly family feud in the interest of peaceful industry.

And whose fault was it that she had achieved, against his sense of right, a victory for expediency? His own. He had kept her locked out of his life on its work side. How often she had asked for light upon the political battle in which he fought, only to be bluffed off with teasing laughter. He had made a fetish of his self-respect while he had denied her the respect he demanded for himself! Because he loved her pretty, childish ignorance, he had amused himself with it at her expense.

Remorse hurried him on. And more than remorse—tenderness revived, thankfulness that the separation between them had been a mirage of his blindness. He and Ellie were not apart! Even at the

worst the longing for her had seduced him. The arid hours of the last two days stretched behind him strewn with accusing havoc. How were they, he had asked himself, to bring up the boy together with this divergence upon a point of honor intruding its Protean question? What reconciliation was possible that would not leave them at heart estranged? This had been the soreness of his bruised mind. Now healing worked its miracle within him. She had not known. He had misjudged her. He had been a brutal egoist. He ran for a car, and when he had caught it, cursed its slowness in his heart.

From the street the rooms looked dark. Was Ellie asleep? For the two days they had had no real talk. Over and over again she had tried to break down the barrier that had erected itself between them, and straining his eyes across it he had seen no way to reach her. When he had told her what he had decided that it was best for them to do, and had asked if she were willing, she had said, "Yes, Howard," and no more.

The pride that had been hurt in the thing she had done had risen finally in her, dominant to reinforce the wall of separation. Yet more than once in the long nights she had left the boy sleeping in her bed and from the threshold between the two rooms looked in at Mallory, seeing with a pang that he too slept. If she had known the sleep to be feigned, her grief would have been no less. It had been feigned; he had feared the venom of his tongue fresh from the gall of his unwelcome cup. And the justification of love gone, love had no rights. So she had crept back to burn her pillow with hot tears. Her mind, quite clear in retrospect, did not forget that the ignorance that had made her act inevitable was of his choosing. The worst suffering of the human heart is a hurt faith; she had her share in that agony of disillusion.

And all the time Mallory had longed for her comforting, for the ease of her cheek against his own, the thrill of her hand reached up to lie upon his hair.

He entered hurriedly, a fear unreasonable and awful drawing him on. What if the rooms were empty! The gas was turned to an infinitesimal point, visible effect of that dire economy which had

taken Ellie's strength in her homesick exile. A desperate yearning to make it all up to her held him molten in the crucible of his repentance. From the threshold between the two rooms where she had stood to look at him he called, "Ellie," and again "Ellie."

She was not there. Little Robert, a limp bundle of deep-breathed content, lay curled against the pillows, one aggressive knee thrust out to the cold air. Mechanically Mallory pulled the clothes over the boy and turned back to the front of the house. There, ready for bed, but dropped upon the floor by the window, her head on the low sill, Ellie slept. The just risen moon shone on her little figure, on the disorder of her curly hair.

There was forgetfulness and sleepy joy in the look she raised to him. Kneeling, Mallory would have gathered her into his arms, but with a strength he did not know she possessed she pulled herself away from him.

"I remember," she said quietly. "I wanted to tell you to-night. I shall not go to your mother. She would see we were—something was wrong. I shall go to Cousin Anna. She wants a house-keeper and she loves babies. I will leave you free to set right my—error, but I will not go to your mother while we are like this."

"Ellie!" He tried to clasp her, startled by the revelation of the distance he had created. She crept from him shivering. It was not a shiver of repulsion,—the night was cool,—but he thought it was.

"Hear me a minute, Ellie." Could it be true that he was afraid of his wife? He watched her as she wound a shawl about her shoulders and sat down stiffly on the edge of the couch, her white feet showing above her slippers. Her doubtful, unresponsive look had changed to blank acquiescence. The disordered curls blew in teasing wisps into her eyes, and she brushed them away as if impatient, hiding with the gesture the tears she would not let him see.

"Ellie! It was all my fault! How could you know! I'd never told you anything." The words were lame, limping far behind his usual fluent loving. He had flung himself down, his arms about her,

She grew stiffer, drawing back from his approach. "You don't respect me, and you must n't touch me," she said, still quietly. She was keeping him away lest a half-reconciliation degrade their love. Recognition of this thrilled him with paralyzing longing to make himself understood. More than many words her quietness took hold upon him.

"You sacrificed yourself for me. I was a cur not to know—you will never forgive me." His arms fell away. He tried to read what the moon showed in her face. "You don't want me. I have driven you from me."

"No, no!" She clasped her hands and looked back at him sorrowfully. "I want you to feel—as you do. You would rather I had killed you! I ought to have guessed. I could have read the papers. Do you suppose, if I had known—" She drew her head up proudly, fronting the peering moon—"why, I would die, Howard, before I would let you do anything dishonorable. I will work, too. We will pay back every cent of that hateful salary."

Howard Mallory, his gaze in hers with a new understanding, saw in his wife's face the light of the hidden places. Now at last she let him gather her close.

"I hate myself. I love you," he breathed.

The night was pungent with autumn. Its air came through the open window filled with the whispering of leaves that stirred rustling to their fall, filled with the mysterious fragrance in which the year exhales its life. The market gardener and his wife slept heavily, soaking up the refreshment of the silent hours for the tasks of the day to come; little Robert nestled, and twisted flower-soft lips in the queer drama of his baby dreams, but the two who waked held to their consciousness, jealous of the hour's passing.

Taken up into the blessedness of the vision that is undimmed only on hilltops beyond some thorny way, they were for all things reassured. The great fortress of courage, trust in each other, had not, after all their fears, been undermined. The cocks were saluting the first undiscoverable tint of dawn before Ellie, a solemn loveliness upon her childlike face, slept upon her husband's arm.